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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: U.S.-CHINA, U.S.-IRAQ, IRAQ, NIGERIA,
SPAIN

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- ¶1. Lead Stories Summary

There are two main stories in the print media this morning: Health Minister Ulla Schmidt will not be a member of SPD chancellor candidate Steinmeier's election campaign team and cooperation between Microsoft and Yahoo to compete with Google. Editorials focused on Microsoft and Yahoo's partnership and on the birth rate among female university graduates. ZDF-TV's early evening newscast heute and ARD-TV's early evening newscast Tagesschau opened with stories that Frank-Walter Steinmeier did not choose Health Minister Schmidt to be a member of his election campaign team.

- ¶2. (U.S.-China) Summit in Washington

According to Frankfurter Rundschau, "it was not the few results of this meeting that made it so important. At issue was the opening of a dialogue between the two global policy heavyweights who have distrusted each other very often in the past but who have been dependent on each other for a long time. China is coming out stronger because of the current global economic crisis. The old U.S. superpower knows that its indebtedness and the necessary domestic reforms will impose limits on the U.S. power. Under Bush, the United States shouldered too heavy a burden with military adventurism and unilateralism. Under Obama, the United States is now looking inward. Washington is reacting to China's global significance and the network of dependencies by attempting to increase China's international responsibility. China is also interested in coordination. Following this crisis both nations must restructure their economic and trade relations. The old model, in which China produces goods, while America consumes them and from which both profited, has crashed. This new geo-political balance of forces may inevitably lead to an upgrading of Sino-U.S. relations but the rhetoric about a G-2 and of a bipolar world is overshooting the mark. It is true that few problems can be resolved without China and the U.S., but both are also unable to resolve them on

their own. Europe should not grieve over this development but find its own role in a changing world."

Under the headline: "Good for Europe," Financial Times Deutschland argued: "It may be possible that historians may consider the U.S.-Sino summit a signal of a turn of an era, but from today's point of view, it is not. The results of the meeting are simply too meager: a vague statement on climate protection and a few words on economic policy. That's all. But it was the first time that both states met at such a high level with so many officials. With this step, the United States is recognizing China as a global power. But what about the Europeans? Of course, China's rise is goes along with a decline in European significance, and to a certain degree, the Europeans must blame themselves for this development. Nevertheless, China and the U.S. are far away from drafting new rules for the world...because Chinese and U.S. strategic interests are largely diametrically opposed. The main issue is to reduce the worst tensions and this is good, including for the Europeans. But all this does not mean that the Europeans are no longer playing a role. But they will be heard only if they speak with one voice."

13. (U.S.-Iraq) Gates on Troop Withdrawal

Secretary Gates's visit to Iraq did not create too much attention in the media. Papers carry factual dpa, AP and Reuters news reports. Financial Times Deutschland wrote under the headline: "Gates Considering faster U.S. Troop Withdrawal From Iraq, "and reported:

"Following his talks in Iraq, Secretary Gates conceded that there is the possibility that the U.S. troop withdrawal from Iraq could be sped up. He said that there is a 'certain chance of a minor acceleration.' It may be possible that one combat brigade could be pulled out earlier than planned, he said, and added that General Odierno...pointed out that the security situation in Iraq is improving faster than anticipated Yesterday, Gates met with the political leadership of the Kurds in Erbil. The Kurdish parties are watching the U.S. troop withdrawal with concern."

14. (Iraq) Storming of Camp Ashraf

Under the headline: "Lost Bunch," Sueddeutsche Zeitung argued; "Among the many bad choices which the opposition Mujahidin in Iraq made was the mistake to join forces with Saddam Hussein. In their home region only a few people forgave them for this. For the same reason, they have no friends in Iraq. After the occupation of Iraq, the Americans disarmed this lost bunch of Mujahidin and kept them in their Ashraf camp as a reserve. [The Americans hoped] that they could be used as agents in the Islamic Republic [of Iran]. But now the Iraqis have taken control over the camp and in view of their previous history, this move could not take a friendly course. And those in Ashraf who had links to the outside departed long ago. Now Baghdad wants to get rid of the last remaining 3,500 Mujahidin but no one wants to accept them. Only an act of mercy would allow them to return to Iran."

Sueddeutsche Zeitung reported under the headline: "Iraqi Soldiers Storming Camp of Exiled Iranians," and wrote: "The Iraqi government is now taking action against the exiled Iranian opposition. When storming a camp of militant opposition forces, Iraqi soldiers and police officers killed eight members of the Iranian People's Mujahidin. During the occupation of the camp that has been autonomously administered by exiled Iranians, 400 Iranians and dozens of Iraqi security forces are supposed to have been injured. The question now is whether Iraq will deport the Iranians, as Tehran is demanding. Western governments and human rights activists are warning against torture and executions in Iran. The U.S. Supreme Commander in Iran, General Odierno, said he was not informed on the actions of the Iraqi military."

15. (Nigeria) Islamic Militants

Frankfurter Allgemeine opined under the headline: "African Taliban?" that "in the past, African Islam was described as 'syncretistic,' i.e. that black Muslims were able to merge their traditional views and cults with Islam. But this time seems to be over, at least in Nigeria, where the Sharia Islam is dominant at least in the northern part of the country. In addition, in several provinces Islamic groups are supposed to be active; their Islam resembles the one of

the Taliban. On the command of the president, the army is now taking action against the Nigerian 'Taliban' to prevent a further disintegration of the country. No one knows whether these preachers and insurgents have any connection with the real Taliban or with al-Qaida. But the existing unease is reason for concern: Nigeria is the most populous African state and is very rich in oil."

According to die tageszeitung, "what is happening now in northern Nigeria has a new quality. Militant Islamists are calling themselves 'Taliban' and are directly attacking the power of the state. This has more to do with transnational Islamism and less with an inner-Nigerian clash of cultures. Violence in Nigeria has happened exactly where the large trans-Sahara trade routes reach western Africa. A joint strategy against the Islamists is now indispensable. But thus far, a discussion has been going on only at the military level. Where is transnational cooperation against radical preachers and their madrassas, for enlightenment and the rule of law, for a functioning education system, for the conservation of nature? The northern Nigerian Islamists are thriving on a basis of ignorance and a lack of perspectives among a quickly growing very poor population. But their governments and their western partners have not yet realized this."

16. (Spain) ETA Bomb Attack

Frankfurter Rundschau editorialized that the grave terror attack in Burgos "shows that the bomb plotters can strike any time at their own discretion and this at a time when everyone thought that the Spanish state would gain the upper hand in the confrontation with this terror movement. But little will help against the violent extremists. However, there is also encouraging news. Even though ETA wanted to celebrate its 50th anniversary with this cynical attack in the Basque provinces, the great majority has realized long ago that ETA is today no longer a resistance movement as it was under the Franco dictatorship. For most Spaniards, ETA is a terror movement which is only in the way of the democratic development in the Basque provinces."

BRADTKE